

REMARKS

Applicants note that the Office Action is confusing because it requires restriction for less than all of the claims (e.g., Claims 1-24 are not subject to a restriction requirement) and, as a result, allows Applicants the option of electing a species (e.g., the species of Claims 1-18) that would not be part of any group of elected claims.

At this point, Applicants have elected Claims 25-31 and 41 because it would appear that the election of these claims would satisfy both the restriction and election of species requirements interposed by the Examiner.

Applicants further note that Claim 40 was not mentioned in this Office Action although it is still pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request examination of this claim both because it was not made the subject of any restriction or election of species requirement and because it is not apparent to Applicants how Claim 40 could possibly be separated from Claim 41 by either an election of species or a restriction requirement.

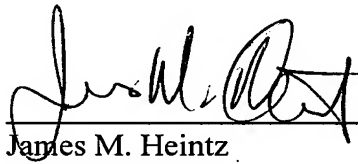
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~~binding~~ Applicants again respectfully draw the Examiner's attention to the fact that Claim 41 is a claim that links the limitations of Claims 25 and 32. Applicants again respectfully submit that Claim 41 prevents restriction between Group I and II as set forth in the current Office Action and therefore repeat their request that the restriction requirement be withdrawn for this reason.

further
Applicant respectfully submits that examination of all currently pending claims would not pose an undue burden on the Examiner. Section 803 of The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure states that "[i]f the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions." Applicant therefore respectfully requests examination of all currently pending claims.

Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for examination on the merits. Early notification of such action is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any suggestions to place the application in even better condition for allowance, Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

DLA PIPER RUDNICK GRAY CARY US LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James M. Heintz', is written over a horizontal line.

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